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MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION BOARD MEETING HELD MONDAY, JULY 13, 2020 AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT A PHYSICAL LOCATION, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER DATED MARCH 18, 2020.

Chair Chris Robinson, Co-Chair Jenny Wilson, Mayor Mike Peterson, Mayor

Jeff Silvestrini, Mayor Dan Knopp, Harris Sondak, Commissioner Jim Bradley, Commissioner Marci Houseman, Mayor Andy Beerman, Mayor Erin

Executive Director Ralph Becker, CWC Attorney Shane Topham,

Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen, Office Administrator Kaye

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Present:

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Others:

OPENING

Ned Hacker, Lance Kovel, Annalee Munsey, Will McCarvill, Dr. Kelly Bricker

Commissioner Christopher F. Robinson will Conduct the Meeting as Chair of the Board, 1. (the "Board") of the Central Wasatch Commission ("CWC").

Chair Chris Robinson called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Mendenhall, Carlton Christensen

Mickelson

2. Chair Christopher F. Robinson will Read his Written Determination Regarding an Electronic Meeting Anchor Location for this Meeting, Pursuant to Utah Code Ann. 52-4-207(4).

The Legislature, pursuant to Section 52-4-207(4), required the Board to make a determination, which was as follows:

"I, as the Chair of the Board of Commissioners, the Board of the Central Wasatch Commission hereby determine that conducting board meetings at any time during the next 30 days at an anchor location presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at the anchor location. The World Health Organization, the President of the United States, the Governor of Utah, the Salt Lake County Mayor, and the Health Department have all recognized that a global pandemic exists related to the new strain of the Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Due to the state of emergency caused by the global pandemic, I find that conducting a meeting at an anchor location under the current state of

public health emergency constitutes a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be

present at the location. According to the information and from State epidemiology experts, Utah is

currently in an acceleration phase, which has the potential to overwhelm the State's health care system."

3. The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the June 1, 2020, Public Hearing.

MOTION: Mayor Silvestrini moved to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2020, Public Hearing. Mayor Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

4. The Board will Consider Approving the Minutes of the June 1, 2020 Board Meeting.

MOTION: Mayor Silvestrini moved to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2020, Board Meeting. Mayor Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

ILA AMENDMENT: Town of Brighton Membership Update

1. The Board will Receive an Update on the ILA Amendment and the Town of Brighton Membership.

Chair Robinson updated the Commission and welcomed the newest member Mayor Dan Knopp. The Board Members welcomed Mayor Knopp and the Town of Brighton to the Commission.

UTAH TRANSIT AUTHORITY: Ex Officio Membership

1. The Board will Discuss Appointing an Ex Officio Commissioner to Represent UTA on the CWC Board.

Chair Robinson reported that when the ILA was edited, terms were provided for ex officio members that would be non-voting and have a one-year term. The Board of Trustees of the Utah Transit Authority ("UTA") submitted a letter expressing interest in appointing an ex officio member, who was identified as Carlton Christensen. They also indicated in the letter that they would be willing to make a \$50,000 annual contribution.

2. The Board will Consider Approving Resolution 2020-18 Appointing an Ex Officio Commissioner to Represent UTA on the CWC Board.

MOTION: Mayor Peterson moved to adopt Resolution 2020-18 appointing an ex officio board member from UTA identified as Carlton Christensen and include Mayor Knopp as a voter on the resolution. Mayor Silvestrini seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Board.

VISITOR USE COMMITTEE: Prospectus Discussion and Possible Action.

1. As Follow Up to the Conversation Started at the June 1, 2020 Board Meeting, the Board shall discuss the Prospectus and Cost of the Visitor Use Study with Members of the Visitor Management Committee of the Stakeholders Council.

Chair Robinson reported that on June 1 there was discussion related to the Visitor Use Study and the prospectus. Executive Director, Ralph Becker stated that Annalee Munsey has been chairing the

1 committee, Will McCarvill has served as Vice Chair, and Greg Summerhays has participated on 2 behalf of the Stakeholders Council. The Stakeholders Council made a recommendation to the full Board to pursue a Visitors Management Study and have been looking at a potential research project 3 with the University of Utah's Outdoor Recreation Program. Dr. Kelly Bricker, Chair of the University 4 of Utah Department of Parks and Recreation, has expertise in this area and offered to frame the study. 5 6 A question was presented to the Commission about whether to move forward.

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Mr. Becker reported that they have had discussions with Lance Kovel, Acting District Ranger with the U.S. Forest Service who has served as their liaison. He noted that he, Annalee Munsee, Dr. Bricker, Blake Perez had an extensive phone call with Mr. Kovel to sort out how a Visitor Use Study might be of value.

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Stakeholders Council Chair, Greg Summerhays reported that a prospectus was prepared and reviewed by the Visitor Management Committee in the Fall of 2019 and recommended to the Stakeholders Council in late 2019 to early 2020. After a majority vote, the Stakeholders Council decided to move it forward for approval and support from the Central Wasatch Commission Board in early 2020. However, due to COVID-19, it was put on pause.

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Metropolitan Water District Assistant General Manager, Annalee Munsey addressed the purpose of the study. Members of the Stakeholders Council wondered how more visitors to the canyons will impact the visitor experience and whether a study could be conducted to evaluate the overall visitor experience.

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Chair Robinson found the merits of the study to be compelling but noted that the Commission would want to hear from the public. He asked if Phase 1 of the study would cost \$50,000, which was confirmed. The cost of Phase Two would depend on the results of Phase 1 and any gaps as well as the interest of the Stakeholders Council to procure additional information. Dr. Bricker reported that a significant amount of work has been done over the years. Their hope with Phase 1 was to compile the information and identify where there might be gaps relevant to visitor use in the canyons.

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Chair Robinson opened the meeting to questions and discussion. Mayor Silvestrini asked about the vote of the Stakeholders Committee. He received a concern earlier in the day about funding the Visitor Use Study versus the Trails Master Plan, assuming there are limited funds. Mr. Summerhays stated that the vote was not unanimous but it was a majority vote. Mayor Silvestrini also stated that the Board has concerns regarding funding and were advised that the City of Sandy has determined not to fund its contribution to the CWC in their fiscal 2020-2021 budget. That is \$90,000 to \$100,000 they were anticipating and that was budgeted for that will not be received. The Budget Committee will recommend that they fund the budget as adopted and be prepared to utilize reserve funds in the amount of \$100,000, which is half of their surplus in excess of operating expenditures for next year. He suggested that fundraising efforts be pursued. He asked about the potential to raise money from fundraising efforts and donors.

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Mr. Summerhays stated that fundraising was being considered to supplement the budget. He also reported that one of the major concerns regarding the project was that there may be a cap on the number of visitors to the canyons due to the results of a Visitor Use Study. Dr. Bricker stated that limiting use would be one of the last strategies that would be employed with the intent being to focus on hot spots and issues. The goal of Phase 1 was to provide information.

47 48 Mr. Summerhays commented that previously the study was referred to as a Visitor Capacity Study. The name was changed to Visitor Management Study to better reflect what they are trying to achieve.

Mayor Wilson expressed her support for moving forward and recognized the budget challenges. She considered the study to be a critical element in gathering information for the Board to make a wise decision.

Mayor Peterson expressed his support on behalf of the Transportation Committee and stated that the data Dr. Bricker provides will be valuable for other committees as well.

Mayor Sondak stated that many in his community are interested in pursuing this kind of information. The document specifically states that it is a research project in conjunction with the University of Utah's Outdoor Recreation Program. He had concerns that as the Co-Chair of Stakeholders Council, Dr. Bricker would be a contractee to the CWC. He had no questions about Dr. Bricker's expertise but was concerned about her position with the CWC. He asked for a list of itemized costs and if overhead will be paid to the University of Utah.

Ms. Munsey commented on the funding and she had spoken with the Utah Outdoor Association and other organizations who felt that a study could help identify funding sources. She clarified that Dr. Bricker serves as Vice Chair of the Stakeholders Council but is not over the subcommittee for Visitor Management.

Mayor Knopp was interested in the position of the Forest Service. Mr. Kovel stated that the position of the Forest Service has not changed since last July. At that time, they provided a question and answer document that highlighted several common questions the Forest Service receives primarily in light of the Utah Department of Transportation's ("UDOT") Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS"). He pointed out that the questions were designed and answered specifically to address carrying capacity in the tri-canyon area. At that time, the Forest Service was not considering any type of capacity limitations in the canyons.

They felt that their Bi-Annual Forest Plan Monitoring Reports and National Visitor Use monitoring provided sufficient information to mitigate impacts caused by users. The Forest Service also felt that the canyons could handle more visitation than they currently experience and the true limiting factor is infrastructure. Their position on the study was neutral. They believed it could be useful to augment existing information from the Forest Service but were not sure to what extent it would be used. Given the massive increase in visitation, the Forest Service continues to monitor the areas and address mitigation efforts on an area by area basis.

Mr. Kovel identified potential limitations on the authority of the Forest Service including State highways up the canyons. He stated that the Forest Service does not have the authority to restrict use of the highways. In addition, the Forest Service does not limit capacity at the ski areas. Capacity issues were discussed. Mr. Kovel stated that they look at the types of impacts certain areas of the forest are receiving but they do not study capacity specifically.

Mayor Wilson found the discussion to be incredibly helpful as they look at the broader relationship with various jurisdictions. She wondered if it would be possible to obtain a written document from the Forest Service that would explain how they view visitor management. She was interested in

knowing if the policies as described are based on the contracts signed with the ski resorts or if the position of the Forest Service is to not get involved in visitor management issues.

Mr. Kovel stated that additional detail could be provided regarding the position of the Forest Service and they could answer specific questions.

Commissioner Houseman asked Mr. Kovel if the Forest Service data is publicly available. Mr. Kovel confirmed that both the Bi-Annual Forest Plan Monitoring Reports and the National Visitation Use Monitoring Data are available to the public. Both can be accessed on their website.

Mayor Sondak had not found a plausible argument that any improvements to the highway or other transportation modes need not consider what happens to increased visitation because visitation goes to the ski area where the Forest Service does not manage the number of people. As part of the EIS, they will want to weigh in on the question of the delivery of more people into the canyons. His experience was that the Forest Service as a lot of information but they do not have the funding to take action. With regard to the budget, he would not want this project to displace funds from the Environmental Dashboard.

Mayor Peterson suggested that due to the lack of infrastructure in the canyons that visitor information somehow be paralleled with the existing infrastructure needs.

Will McCarvill stated that the Forest-wide surveys and reports are not specific to the Central Wasatch Commission or the Wasatch Cache National Forest. He drove the area recently and stated that not surprisingly, there were hundreds of cars up and down both sides of the road and near the major trailheads.

Chair Robinson asked why the Visitor Use Study has potential dates listed as October 2020 through May 2021. Dr. Bricker stated that this was due to uncertainty regarding funding and being able to get the study off of the ground. The discussion was paused due to the time constraints of the Board Members.

CWC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

 1. <u>Executive Committee: Chair Christopher F. Robinson, on behalf of the Executive Committee will discuss the June 15, 2020, Executive Committee Minutes and information regarding the presentation from DUOT regarding the EIS.</u>

 Chair Robinson felt that the substance of the Executive Committee had already been covered by what was discussed during the Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting.

 2. <u>Budget/Finance Committee: Chair Jeff Silvestrini, on behalf of the Budget/Finance Committee will discuss the July 9, 2020, Committee Meeting for discussion and direction from the Board regarding reserves. Minutes of the July meeting are included.</u>

Chair Silvestrini reported on activities of the Budget and Finance Committee. The Committee believed it was important to have a reserve of at least one year's budget set aside due to uncertainty caused by member jurisdictions making contributions. The contribution from Sandy City was in question, which put \$100,000 at risk. If approximately \$800,000 remains in the bank for the year's

operations, it will provide a \$200,000 cushion that could be used for projects. That would impact an idea presented by the Committee of spending \$100,000 from the reserve on short-term projects. The Committee also discussed raising money for projects such as the Visitor Use Study. It was suggested that the CWC Board fund \$18,000 to \$20,000 worth of short-term projects but pursue fundraising to cover the balance.

Action: It was recommended that staff be directed to develop a fundraising strategy for short and long-term projects and ongoing operations and bring a specific proposal forward to the Executive Committee and the CWC Board. The CWC Budget Finance Committee also recommended the Board ratify spending \$100,000 from reserves for projects contingent upon the receipt of Sandy City's member contribution.

Commissioner Houseman reported that a majority passed the budget with four members of the Council supporting the CWC funding. They were, however, vetoed. She stated that a majority of the Council supports funding the CWC.

Mayor Beerman commented on the budget and considered it wise to keep a heavy reserve but he was not sure that the additional \$100,000 to be appropriated contingent upon Sandy City. His understanding was that there is one full year in reserves and if one member does not pay, they will still have 90% in hand. He considered now to be a good time to move forward with many projects and did not want to delay. He recalled that with Mountain Accord they tried the public fundraising with very little success. They have had success working with non-profits who have been involved in their efforts on specific projects. He suggested that if they take that route to be very targeted in terms of who they ask and what they ask for.

Commissioner Bradley agreed that there is a great deal of potential in terms of targeted projects and that their focus could be more ambitious.

Mayor Silvestrini commented that with Mountain Accord the asks were not targeted. The Visitor Study is something many people support so targeted fundraising may be successful. Possible options were discussed as well as the importance of tying the fundraising to specific projects and offering incentives.

Mayor Wilson did not object to the concept of targeted fundraising but felt that there was a reality to the fiscal impacts of COVID-19. There is also a longer-term assessment that should be explored.

3. <u>Short-Term Projects Committee: Chair Jim Bradley, on behalf of the Short-Term Projects Committee will discuss items under discussion and potential meeting dates.</u>

Commissioner Bradley reported on the efforts of the Short-Term Projects Committee, which included:

• Last year's fiscal budget included funds allocated for short-term projects. That money had been passed on and the projects were underway.

• This year's fiscal budget included \$50,000 that was allocated for short-term projects. \$20,000 was allocated to the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance for the Gate Buttress Infrastructure Project.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

• Salt Lake County recently approved \$20,000 from the Regional Transportation Choice Funds (4th Quarter funds) to the CWC for the replacement of the Desolation Trail from Mill D North to Dog Lake. Once the Central Wasatch Commission receives that funding, Trails Utah will begin work.

• The Short-Term Projects Committee had not yet scheduled a meeting. There is currently \$30,000 remaining of the budgeted amount.

Commissioner Bradley stressed the importance of fundraising opportunities but considered the Environmental Dashboard and the Visitor Management Study to be of greatest priority. Short-term projects will benefit the CWC in showing activity and doing positive things for the canyons.

Transportation Committee: Chair Mike Peterson, on behalf of the Transportation 4. Committee will discuss items under discussion. Minutes of the June 30, 2020 meeting are included.

Mayor Peterson commented that the CWC was criticized for a lack of productivity and not getting the Federal Legislation passed. As a result, he considered short-term projects to be critical. He reported that the Transportation Committee has been very active. They recently met and reviewed the three potential transportation alternatives. The Committee took public comment, held individual meetings with transportation experts, and provided a written summary representing the CWC Board's position. An update was provided to the Board Members. The City of Cottonwood Heights was also heavily involved. He applauded those who participated for their efforts. He stated that the report was submitted to UDOT and will hopefully prove to be valuable.

With regard to the Mountain Transportation System ("MTS") process, the Transportation Committee hoped to have a recommended MTS by the winter of 2020-2021. The CWC staff in coordination with the EIS team from UDOT also created an infographic to summarize the roles each played in Transportation Initiatives.

Legislative Land/Tenure Committee: Chair Jenny Wilson, on behalf of the Legislative **5.** Land/Tenure Committee will present items for discussion and direction from the Board. Minutes of the June 4, 2020 meeting are included.

Mayor Wilson reported on the efforts of the Legislative Land/Tenure Committee and thanked those who have been knocking on doors since the last meeting. She recognized that the decision was made to have one-on-one conversations to get a better read of where windows of opportunity may be.

- Chair Robinson summarized the following comments submitted electronically:
- Steve Van Maren indicated that the 3/30/20 meeting retrieved from the Utah Public Notice website does not appear to include the written comments sent to the board for the previous month's Budget Hearing. He suggested they be included in the public record as part of the minutes.
- Mary Young, Secretary of Wasatch Graffiti Busters, thanked the CWC for the short-term project grant of \$2,600. Their members and volunteers began working in April to remove graffiti in the

Cottonwood Canyons and have been working closely with the Unified Police Department ("UPD") and Canyon Patrol Officers. UPD contacts members to report graffiti to be removed and members contact UPD Dispatch when they observe illegal activity in the canyons. They have gained a few new members who are learning how to properly remove graffiti, especially in a watershed. Their graffiti removal efforts were described. Ms. Young reported that they have removed at least 175 pieces of graffiti from natural surfaces. She felt that they were keeping up with reported graffiti relatively well but were trying to expand their membership.

John Knoblock commented that the CWC was formed in part to implement the Mountain Accord action and is moving forward with most aspects. The only piece not moving forward is the development and implementation of a comprehensive Trails and Cycling Master Plan. Based on initial scoping, the mapping analysis, planned development, and public outreach should be done by a consultant who can plan for both Forest Service and private lands. The consultant will work with the Stakeholders Council, Trails Committee, Salt Lake County Planning, and the Forest Service Trails Manager. Both the Salt Lake County Planning and the Forest Service support this idea. Neither has the staff or resources to complete the effort without hiring a Planning Consultant at an estimated cost of \$100,000. He asked that the trails plan that is part of Mountain Accord be funded as a first priority.

Chair Robinson also spoke with Mr. Knoblock by phone about the matter.

Sarah Bennett was aware that the CWC is considering several needs for funding. One includes a Trails Master Plan for the Central Wasatch that includes a thorough inventory of existing trails. Another is the Visitor Management/Impact Study formerly referred to as a Capacity Study. A comprehensive Master Plan for trails in the study area was identified as a vital component of a long-range plan for the Central Wasatch during the Mountain Accord process and prior. She stated that a Trails Master Plan will provide critical information that must dovetail the transportation considerations and any other infrastructure planning. Trails and trailheads are tools that can be utilized to manage people and should be planned before a separate Carrying Capacity or Visitor Management Study.

Pat Shea submitted a comment via chat that the Forest Service does not believe watershed health or water quality is within their jurisdiction. He also believed that the Environmental Dashboard should be the highest priority, with the Visitor Management Study being useful but of a lower priority.

The following comments were made electronically during the meeting:

John Knoblock commented that Lance Kovel mentioned that one of the Forest Service's priorities was ensuring that there is adequate infrastructure. He also noted that the District Rangers specifically asked that a Trails Master Plan be completed before moving forward on other significant projects. Mr. Knoblock wanted to ensure that with funding other projects, the Trails Master Plan would not be overlooked. He also reported that construction on the new 3.5-mile trail connecting Big Water Trailhead to Elbow Fork and Millcreek Canyon had begun.

 Carl Fisher expressed support for the Visitor Use Study. He believed that a lot could be learned about trails and trail design as part of the process. Mr. Fisher also noted that part of the Legislation was a comprehensive Trails and Recreation Management Plan. He believed the Visitor Use Study would tie into that and was happy to aid in fundraising efforts. His opinion was that trails should come later.

Steve Van Maren commented that the meeting minutes from June 1 state that the Board Meeting commenced at 5:30 p.m. in the heading and 6:30 p.m. in the body of the text. He believed that the 5:30 p.m. start time was incorrect.

There was no additional public comment. Chair Robinson closed the public comment period.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Chair Robinson recognized two new members of the Committee namely Clayton Christensen, an ex officio member representing UTA, and Mayor Knopp from the Town of Brighton.

Commissioner Christensen looked forward to working with the Board and recognized the need for improved transportation solutions.

Chair Robinson reported that \$50,000 was set aside for short-term projects with \$30,000 remaining. The Visitor Management Study was expected to cost \$35,000 to \$50,000 and the Environmental Dashboard is divided into two portions. There was a notion that if half of the projects are funded, additional fundraising could take place. He proposed that the Committee absorb Sandy City's portion from the operating reserve, if necessary, and that \$100,000 be set aside to be used on a 50% matching basis to fund both the Visitor Use Study as well as the second-year installment of the Environmental Dashboard. The remainder of the funds would be available for short-term projects.

 Mayor Peterson noted that fundraising is unsuccessful more often than not and wondered what the plan would be if fundraising is insufficient. Chair Robinson suggested that the issue be addressed as they go. Mr. Becker supported the idea set forth by Chair Robinson and stated that staff would welcome the challenge to attempt to raise money. He also stated that the Board could take other action if they were unsuccessful in raising all or some of what is required.

Mayor Mendenhall asked that Carl Fisher help with fundraising efforts.

Carlton Christensen clarified that governmental agencies can be contracted with directly without going through a procurement process.

Mr. Becker asked for clarification and stated that the Environmental Dashboard has been phased over two years with half being budgeted this year. It was suggested that they pursue funding to help with the second half as part of next year's budget and speed up the project. Chair Robinson did not recommend addressing the second half of the Environmental Dashboard now. He stated that the Board's recommended action would be to set aside \$100,000 to be used on a 50/50 match basis to pay for the Visitor Use Study as well as Year Two of the Environmental Dashboard project. The balance would be added to the \$30,000 left in the short-term projects budget. He asked that staff report back to the Board at the next meeting with details regarding fundraising efforts and a specific draft resolution that could be approved.

 Mayor Sondak recalled that Mayor Silvestrini did not want to commit money to draw down beyond one year's worth of reserves. Chair Robinson's opinion was that if the CWC were to go away without having the Environmental Dashboard being completed, he would be disappointed. In addition, there has been a great deal of clamor for the Visitor Use Study.

Mayor Mendenhall did not want to pull from reserves but her previous comments were based on the short-term projects list. This, however, was not part of that discussion and she supported what was proposed.

ADJOURNMENT

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MOTION: Commissioner Bradley moved to adjourn. Mayor Sondak seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

11 The Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 p.m.

1 I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Board Meeting held Monday, July 13, 2020.

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4 <u>Teri Forbes</u>

- 5 Teri Forbes
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9 Minutes Approved: _____